



RAISING UP

The good news at Helping Up Mission



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NOW IT'S UP TO US

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"Thank you for helping me find myself in order to accomplish my goals, maintain my family, and gain a tribe. Thank you for giving me another chance to live."

Fearfully and Wonderfully Crystian

Crystian, age 34, was born and raised in Baltimore, Maryland. "I was born with a golden spoon," Crystian recalls. "I was the first grandkid and my mother's first child. My mother and father split when I was 2 years old. My parents were my biggest enablers, and I was spoiled rotten. I attended a Christian church and school, and I liked to model, act, sing, and dance. After 5th grade, I transferred to a public school, and it was a whole new world."

"While I was adjusting to life in public schools, we moved around a lot. By the time I was 14, I became rebellious and started running away. I would come back home, see a therapist, and run away again. Looking back on this time in my life, I was seeking attention and wanted to do my own thing. I did not know what 'NO' meant. As a result, I put my mother through a lot of stress, as she was constantly calling around and trying to find me."

"In the 12th grade, I was 'cool,' and I started smoking marijuana socially. At first, I did not even inhale the smoke. I also got pregnant for the first time. I was pregnant with my first son

when I graduated and even got my driver's license! By the time I was 23, I had seven kids, but I had a good support system in my mom, grandma, aunt, and friends."

"On the 4th of July 2012, my daughter Makiya died from sudden infant death syndrome. During this time, I smoked marijuana socially, but I was not a heavy smoker or drinker. My decision-making was horrible, and the company that I kept was a big factor in my not knowing who I was. In 2014, I was in an abusive relationship when I got into an altercation that turned violent. During the argument, I was shot in the face. I could not believe what happened, but I ended up lying to the police to protect my abuser."

"Things got really bad in 2020. I had graduated from smoking marijuana to taking ecstasy. I was working two jobs and needed to 'stay up,' and everything went downhill quickly. Before I knew it, I lost my jobs, my relationship, and my truck. So, I packed up my stuff and moved to Atlanta looking for a change of scenery."



NOW IT'S UP TO US Daniel's Monthly Update

Dear HUM Family,

Recently, I had the opportunity to review some historical Helping Up Mission (HUM) board meeting minutes dating back to 1896 all the way through the years up to the late 1920s and covering the period the Great Depression. Reading those documents was a poignant reminder of the faith, sacrifice, and vision for transforming the lives of alcoholics, the poor and less fortunate. HUM has been a beacon of hope since 1885 that continues to offer hope and transformation to those struggling with addiction, homelessness, and despair. We are still in the business of as they wrote in the articles of incorporation "rescue of those leading dissolute and abandoned lives."

HUM remains committed to that mission today and while the look of our buildings and materials along with the logistics of our programs may change over time—the faith-filled focus and dedication remains true. Sadly, the need for our HUM has only grown—the addiction landscape expanded beyond alcoholism and now includes a multitude of more potent drugs like heroin and fentanyl.

When you stand with HUM through your support, prayers, and service, you open a door to a new life—one that provides an opportunity to leave alcohol and substance use behind, find healing from trauma and experience life in a community of hope for those we serve like Crystian. As she shared in this month's newsletter, "While I have been at HUM, I have accomplished a couple of important things: First, I have discovered who I am – fearfully and wonderfully ME. I am unapologetically me and I love the new ME. Life is not perfect, and I will be okay if I lead a life in recovery knowing God sees everything. Second, we cannot do this alone! I can cry on another's shoulder, and we can do anything if we do it together."

Now nearly 140 years after our founding, HUM is positioned to respond to the increased needs of addiction, trauma, and homelessness but the urgency is greater than ever. HUM simply couldn't do this work without your prayers, support, and service—thanks for standing with us!

Serving with you,

Ladies Fashion Show

Earlier this summer, ladies at the Center for Women & Children planned and led a fashion show to highlight and celebrate the generous donations of clothes given for them. One leader, Deborah W., said, "It was a way to show gratitude for the clothing donations and have pride in ourselves, and to participate and collaborate in a community event together. It created some fun in the community and allowed me to exercise my creativity. It also pulled in people who typically wouldn't show off themselves, who try to hide behind the scenes, but it got them out of their shells."



“Atlanta did not ‘fix’ me. I moved back to Baltimore in 2022 and ran into an old boyfriend, Nick, who was dealing with his own substance abuse problem. He said, ‘I got somewhere for us to go.’ He had a dream about Helping Up Mission (HUM), and on July 6, 2023, I entered the Women’s Spiritual Recovery Program (WSRP), and a week later, Nick entered the Spiritual Recovery Program (SRP).”

“When I walked into the Center for Women & Children, a scripture was painted on the wall – Deuteronomy 28:6: ‘You will be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out.’ I knew instantly that I was supposed to be here.”

“HUM is different. Sure, there are highs and lows, but if you give it your all, you will get it all! During my time here, I joined the WSRP Choir, Voices of Praise. I love Ms. Nikki, Outreach Coordinator and Choir Director. She is one of the first people I go to when I need a hug or a

shoulder to cry on. I learned what ‘I am my sister’s keeper’ means; we ladies are all in this together!”

“While I have been at HUM, I have accomplished a couple of important things: First, I have discovered who I am – fearfully and wonderfully ME. I am unapologetically me and I love the new ME. Life is not perfect, and I will be okay if I lead a life in recovery knowing God sees everything. Second, we cannot do this alone! I can cry on another’s shoulder, and we can do anything if we do it together.”

“I stayed still for 12 months and became the 7th graduate of the WSRP. My kids came to my ceremony and stood there proud of their mom. For the first time in my life, it was not about me. I finally finished something that I started. Other women come up to me and say, ‘I stayed because of you.’ And now I get to see them graduate.”

“This past November, I enrolled in courses at Allstate Driving. In April, I was hired as a Transportation Coordinator for the WSRP, helping other clients get to their appointments. And on July 11, after passing my driving tests, I received my CDL license!”

“I have dealt with legal issues, lost a cousin, and got teeth pulled while here. Everything I have gone through is necessary because it helped me find ME. And I could not have done it without my tribe AND my boyfriend Nick, who graduated from the men’s SRP!”

“Thank you for helping me find myself in order to accomplish my goals, maintain my family, and gain a tribe. Thank you for giving me another chance to live. Because of you, I have had dreams fulfilled and you have inspired other women to chase their own.”

To read more recovery stories, visit helpingupmission.org/stories/Crystian

Focus On Recovery - Crystian J.

By: Laura Staroneck, Asst. Director, Center for Women & Children



Fearfully and Wonderfully ME. Do you believe that you are fearfully and wonderfully made? The work here at Helping Up Mission is about just this. Helping men and women to remember that they are fearfully and wonderfully made. We do this by walking each client and not behind them or in front of them. We do this by reminding those that enter our doors as Crystian in her story noted to ‘be unapologetically ME and slowly I started to love myself- the new ME’.

Why emphasize the ME? As men and women come to Helping Up Mission daily, we remind them that this is the time for yourself. This is the time to lean into who God says you are and not the people outside the door that may have brought pain and despair into their lives. We pride ourselves on focusing on the whole person because as a human being on this earth that

God created, this is what we are called to do.

Additionally, ‘HUM is different’ is also noted in the focus story. We are different not just because of what we are but who we are on the inside walls of both campuses. As the Assistant Director of the Center for Women & Children, HUM is different. However, it is not just HUM that is unique and different in its own way, I am different because of the impact the women and men have had on my life. This circles back to being fearfully and wonderfully ME. What impact has HUM made in your life?

You, dear reader, are fearfully and wonderfully made. Isn’t that great news?

You're going to love it!

Months of prayer and planning have led to this...

Helping Up Mission is launching a new look! It reflects our shared commitment to being more than a shelter. To our life-changing work together that is restoring hope and rebuilding lives.

But though we have a new look, rest assured we are still the same Helping Up Mission you know and love. And we are more committed than ever to ensuring our Greater Baltimore neighbors receive the loving care and support they need on their journey of healing.

This is only a sneak peek of what you can expect. We hope you love it - and stay tuned for the big reveal in next month's newsletter!

Join Team HUM!



Our team of volunteers – runners, walkers, and those cheering us on are INCREDIBLE! They are training and fundraising over the next two months to run (or walk) the streets of Baltimore City, declaring that men and women (some with children) experiencing homelessness and addiction are NOT alone. Their community keeps pace with them as they fight the most brutal battle of their lives – **one day at a time, one mile at a time.**



The 2024 Baltimore Running Festival offers a race for EVERYONE – the always popular 5K, 10K, Half Marathon, Marathon, and the challenging BaltiMORON-a-thon. And for those unable to run or attend, you can join Team HUM virtually. Come one, come all!

The money that you help raise is used to fund life-saving, life-changing programs and services for over 560 men and women, and as many as 15 children.

To become a member of Team HUM today, visit:
helpingupmission.org/teamhum

P.S. Thanks to everyone that has already signed up to race and fundraise; we'll see you on race day, but we need to register another 100 Baltimore Running Festival participants before Labor Day! Join our team today by contacting **Team HUM Captain Martha Robison at mrobison@helpingup.org / 410-873-1491**



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Our Mission

Helping Up Mission provides hope to people experiencing homelessness, poverty or addiction by meeting their physical, psychological, social and spiritual needs.

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